



Arkansas Advocates  
*for*  
Nursing Home Residents

April 11, 2011

Chairman Julius Genachowski  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Re: **Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service Lifeline and Link Up  
CC Docket No. 96-45; WC Docket 03-109; WC Docket 11-42**

Dear Chairman Genachowski,

Your leadership in addressing the issues facing the Lifeline Assistance Program is appreciated. We are supportive of the majority of proposed reforms that will increase participation as well as eliminate waste, fraud and abuse.

When educating residents, family and those who work to support the health of older individuals, I often refer them to the Lifeline program. It is one of the many tools I use to help individuals remain independent, safe, healthy and empowered. Programs such as Lifeline are not only a resource to seniors, but individuals with disability and injury also benefit from the service.

While most of the proposed reforms are reasonable, a few suggestions raise concerns. Measures that would impose either a monthly fee or an enrollment fee and require individuals to prove poverty seem to run contrary to the goal of the program. Lifeline has been largely successful due to the ease of enrollment and affordable nature of the program. The program will suffer if people are first asked to prove they are poor and then required to pay for services. The current eligibility requirements seem to be working well and I know that the Arkansans who utilize Lifeline find it to be a tremendous resource and are thankful for the assistance.

Now more than ever, people need to be able to access the programs and services that have been created to help those in need. While our nation is struggling, it would be a grave disservice to place caps on the support the program provides to low-income individuals in need. Lifeline provides a way for people to remain safe, enabled, and in many cases, employed.

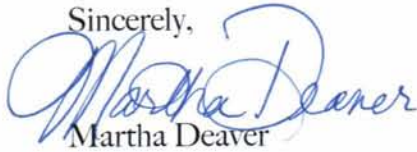
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AANHHR is a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting and improving the quality of care and life for Arkansas residents in long term care facilities.

[www.aanhr.org](http://www.aanhr.org)

It is prudent to look for ways to streamline and improve the Lifeline program but imposing usage fees, burdensome certification processes or capping service will only hinder the people Lifeline has been created to serve.

Sincerely,



Martha Deaver  
Executive Director

CC:

Commissioner Michael J. Copps  
Commissioner Robert McDowell  
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn  
Commissioner Meredith Attwell Baker